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EQUATORIAL GUINEA SEES PROGRESS IN PUBLIC EDUCATION
Oil Revenues Enabling Improvements in Public Education System

MALABO (August 4, 2010) — The educational system in Equatorial Guinea (República de Guinea Ecuatorial) has undergone many changes and overcome significant challenges over the years, and today the government is making strides in the promotion of education and professional training at all levels and for all age groups. From the promotion of compulsory education to advanced studies, the Government of Equatorial Guinea is making education a top priority as part of its Horizon 2020 development plan.

(To see video of Vice Minister Evono Avomo's interviews, visit: <http://govv.is/ijb>)

“The education system in the country is funded by the state,” said Mr. Secundino Evono Avomo, Equatorial Guinea’s Minister of Education, Science and Sports. “Oil resources are devoted to this sector and large quantities of those resources have been allocated to education investments such as the national university and the construction of educational facilities. There are resources set aside for future generations besides what is being invested now. If you had the opportunity to travel around the country, you could really see what is being done in the education sector.”

Minister Evono Avomo recognized that President Obiang has made education a priority and that investment in education is essential because an “educated country is a developed country.” In comparison to its African neighbors, the Minister highlighted that the “country under the current administration, has made great strides in recuperating what had been lost under the previous regime in all aspects, not only in education.” Equatorial Guinea has “witnessed advances in a short amount of time that other countries have taken years to accomplish.”

He explained that every town council in Equatorial Guinea – consisting of approximately 1,400 people – has at least one or two schools and every man, woman and child has access to education. Urban areas, such as the large cities of Malabo and Bata, have multiple schools, both public and private, for all education levels. Equatorial Guinea’s citizens have access to education from childhood, it is mostly free because the government, by law, provides for primary education, secondary is provided at low cost and university-level education only requires a minor tuition.

As part of Equatorial Guinea’s commitment to compulsory education and to meet the goals of the Horizon 2020 plan, Minister Evono Avomo acknowledged that there will be challenges ahead and that greater attention is being paid today to the development of technical training programs for those who do not want to pursue university and professional studies.

The National University of Equatorial Guinea (UNGE) was founded in 1995 as the first national university, which has graduated well over 13,000 students in various professions.

The government is making investments to further expand the size of the university campus, and numerous programs, including subsidized dormitories and improvements in social science, education, science curriculums, and international study abroad programs. Equatorial Guinea's government has also, in partnership with Amerada Hess, established a \$40 million education program through which primary school teachers participate in a training program to ensure they have an understanding of the most modern techniques relating to child development.

The government also continues to partner with foreign oil companies to undertake a multimillion dollar school renovation program and continue to work with foreign countries to reform outdated curriculum materials.

About Equatorial Guinea

The Republic of Equatorial Guinea (República de Guinea Ecuatorial) is the only Spanish-speaking country in Africa, and one of the smallest nations on the continent. In the late-1990s, American companies helped discover the country's oil and natural gas resources, which only within the last five years began contributing to the global energy supply. Equatorial Guinea is now working to serve as a pillar of stability and security in its region of West Central Africa. The country will host the 2011 Summit of the African Union. For more information, visit <http://www.guineaccuatorialpress.com>.

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EQUATORIAL GUINEA SPONSORS NATIONAL LITERARY PRIZE CONTEST TO PROMOTE CULTURE AND LITERACY IN SOCIETY

MALABO (August 2, 2010) — The National Library of Equatorial Guinea is sponsoring a national literary contest, the Obiang Nguema Mbasogo Literary Award, in which all Equatorial Guinean citizens, both students and adults can participate. This annual contest is aimed at promoting culture and raising the level of literacy in the society.

At the student level, the literary contest requires contestants to produce a novel that reflects situations inspired by topics pertaining to culture, family disruption, moral values, education, etc. At the adult level, the contestants can write either an essay or an abstract novel on any topic of choice.

The entries will be submitted in August to the National Library of Equatorial Guinea, located in Malabo. The winners will be announced by local and international media. For students, the first prize is a full scholarship to a four-year college in the U.S. with all expenses paid and the publication of the literary work. The second place prize is 500,000 CFAS (~ USD \$1,000), and third is 300,000 CFAS (~ USD \$500) and the publication of the novel. The first place adult winners will receive one million CFAS (~ USD \$2,000) prize, second place 500,000 CFAS (~USD \$1000) and third place 300,000 CFAS (~ USD \$500) with a publication of the work as well.

The National Library of Equatorial Guinea opened last year and was sponsored by the government. The National Library will lead other initiatives and contests to promote culture and education in Equatorial Guinea. These programs include contests in painting, story telling, short films, children's programs, the creation of a theatre company in Equatorial Guinea, the acquisition of mobile libraries to distribute texts and boost literacy, and construction of newsstands for easier accessibility in all regions across the country.

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EQUATORIAL GUINEA PARTNERS WITH CENTRAL AFRICAN STATES TO FIGHT H1N1 AND HIV/AIDS

MALABO (August 6, 2010) — Equatorial Guinea (República de Guinea Ecuatorial) and the Global Viral Forecasting Initiative along with several Central African States have partnered with the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) to form a network to fight H1N1 and HIV. The purpose of the network's recent forum was to share knowledge and best practices, and to collect data and prevention procedures among military health professionals in the region.

The network stressed the importance of fighting pandemics and to develop strategies based on principles of international collaboration. The Ministries of Defense of each member state selected a representative to represent the state and liaise on related issues with other countries in the network. Further and in coordination with GVFI, each and every defense force within the network is responsible for the gathering information and experiences on the prevention of infectious diseases.

As part of a broader effort by the government of Equatorial Guinea to improve public health for its citizens, the country's Prime Minister, Ignacio Milam Tang, met with members of the government to discuss preparations for the upcoming Sixtieth Session of the Regional Committee of the World Health Organization (WHO) for Africa, which is scheduled to take place in Malabo, Equatorial Guinea for the first time from August 30 to September 3.

Representatives from the country's Ministries of Health and Social Welfare, Interior and Local Corporations and Transportation, Technology, Post and Telecommunications will attend the WHO Regional Committee. The event is expected to gather 45 health ministers from various African nations, as well as members and staff of the WHO. The meetings will address HIV/AIDS prevention, malaria, alcohol abuse reduction, primary health care of mother and child, and the fight against tuberculosis and other tropical diseases.

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